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REMARKS

Reconsideration is requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1-3 are amended. New claims 4-5 have been added. Claims 1-5 are pending.

Applicants would like to thank the Examiner for the telephone interview conducted on June 10, 2005 with Applicant's representative, James Larson (Reg. No. 40,443). In the interview, Applicant's representative pointed out the differences between claim 1 as examined and the prior art to Van Oel and Fukui, in particular that the paint in Fukui is not applied to a surface of an end portion. The Examiner disagreed and suggested amending the claims to better define the meaning of "end portion". No agreement was reached concerning allowable subject matter.

I. Claim amendments

Claim 1 is amended to improve the form thereof. In addition, claim 1 now recites that the surface-roughening or painting is applied a surface of a terminal end portion of the lens flange portion, wherein the surface includes a terminal end face of the lens flange portion. This amendment is supported by the original disclosure, for example page 7, lines 19-23; page 11, lines 2-4; and Figures 2 and 3.

Claims 2 and 3 are amended to improve the form thereof. In addition, claims 2 and 3 are amended to recite that the terminal end portion has an end that includes the end face, and the end includes an inner corner (claim 2) and an outer corner (claim 3) that are substantially square. The amendments to claims 2 and 3 are supported by the original disclosure, for example page 10, lines 4-7.

New claim 4 recites the reflector as being movable toward and away from the lamp housing, the terminal end portion of the lens flange portion extends to a position generally between the reflector and the lamp housing, and a range of the surface-roughening or painting applied to the surface of the terminal end portion is positioned outside of the reflector. The language in claim 4 is supported by the original disclosure, for example page 9, lines 3 to 8 and Figure 2.

New claim 5 recites that the leg portion and the lamp housing are positioned within the accommodation space of the vehicle near the surface-roughening or painting applied to the

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surface of the terminal end portion of the lens flange portion. The language in claim 5 is supported by the original disclosure, for example Figures 1 and 2.

No new matter has been added by these amendments.

II. Claim rejection

Claims 1-3 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Van Oel (U.S. 5,327,330) in view of Fukui (JP 6-50113). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Van Oel discloses an automotive headlamp having an inner lamp body 102, an outer housing 104, and a lens 104f that includes a flange portion protruding towards the lamp housing (see Figure 1 of Van Oel). Van Oel fails to disclose or suggest surface-roughening or painting applied to any surface of any portion of a lens flange portion. Van Oel also fails to disclose or suggest a leg portion that extends from a location which deviates from the surface of the end portion so as to bypass the surface of the end portion.

Fukui discloses an automotive headlamp that is described in detail in Applicant's specification at pages 1-2 and illustrated in Figure 6. As illustrated in Applicant's Figure 6, Fukui discloses a lens 105 having a lens flange portion 111 that extends from a circumferential edge 109 towards a lamp housing 110. Irregularities are formed on an inner surface of the lens flange portion 111 by embossing, and a paint membrane 111a being formed on the surface having the irregularities (see page 2, lines 2-5 of Applicant's specification). The purpose of the irregularities and painting in the Fukui reference is to prevent the leakage of light from the periphery of the lens surface 105a and help conceal interior structure such as the reflector 102.

Fukui fails to disclose or suggest surface-roughening or painting applied to a surface of a terminal end portion of the lens flange portion, where the surface includes a terminal end face of the lens flange portion. The irregularities and paint membrane 111a in Fukui are not applied to a surface of a terminal end portion of the lens flange portion 111.

Further, the surface to which the irregularities and paint membrane 111a in Fukui are applied does not include a terminal end face of the lens flange portion. Rather, in Fukui, the surface containing the irregularities and paint membrane 111a stops short of the terminal end face of the lens flange portion 111. This can be seen in Applicant's Figure 6 which shows the irregularities and paint membrane 111a stopping well short of the right end of the lens flange portion that is disposed within a recessed space in the lamp housing 110. Since the right end of

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the lens flange portion and the terminal end face are within the recessed space of the lamp housing, there would be no need, and therefore no teaching or suggestion, to apply the irregularities and paint membrane 111a in Fukui to the terminal end face.

Surface-roughening or painting applied to a surface of a terminal end portion of the lens flange portion, wherein the surface includes a terminal end face of the lens flange portion, as recited in claim 1, provides certain advantages as described in Applicant's specification, for example at pages 3-5, 9-10 and 12-13, and Figures 3, 4A and 4B. For example, the roughened or painted terminal end portion surface, including the terminal end face, makes it possible for light traveling in the flange to be internally reflected or absorbed rather than passing through the end of the flange. This construction helps to make the gap between the headlamp and the vehicle body less conspicuous (see, for example, page 3, lines 13-15, and page 3, line 23 to page 4, line 2). Thus, Applicant's headlamp provides advantages and results neither disclosed nor suggested by the cited references.

Van Oel and Fukui fail to disclose or suggest every limitation of claim 1. Therefore, claim 1 is patentable over Van Oel and Fukui. Claims 2-3 depend from and further limit claim 1 and are patentable along with claim 1 and need not be separately distinguished at this time. Applicants reserve the right to file additional arguments at a later date specifically addressing the rejections to claims 2 and 3.

III. New claims

New claims 4-5 depend from claim 1 and are patentable along with claim 1.

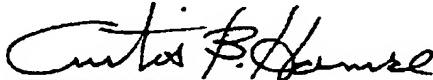
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IV. Conclusion

In view of the above, Applicants request reconsideration of the application in the form of a Notice of Allowance. If a phone conference would be helpful in resolving any issues related to this matter, please contact Applicants' attorney listed below at 612.455.3802.

Respectfully Submitted,

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